

The Dog-Doo Affair © Xen. 7th
Or the unsung heroes of fatherhood.

A child's naive innocence is refreshing but not without experiencing at least one of those memorable moments which temper all romantic notions about raising a kid. Any parent understands what "those memorable moments" mean to question without comment the 'joys' of parenting so many people nostalgically parrot. I did it once in learning never do that again, ever! A moment such as when my three-year-old discovered the semi-fresh 'jealousy deposit' our family dog left in her box of fresh play sand. The family 'dog-child' did not accept sharing what once was all of her attention with a child. She liked the kid but was mad at her mom and I. "What has a kid that I do not," asked the dog? Ask her mother... However, to that uninitiated toddler, 'the dog's jealousy deposit' appeared much like a popular, similarly shaped chocolate candy all children relish at first bite. Therefore, upon discovering anything looking like the yummy treat her little memory said eat and without hesitation it was in her tiny mouth before the speediest adult could stop her. Imagine this parent's shock at discovering his little bundle of joy belching dog-poop breath, noisily retching "yuck-gag-yurhgr-gag -WAAAA-gaaaaaaaag" through a dangling tongue covered with wet, smeared 'turd,' while holding up the uneaten half in her hand for clear examination. Looks like dog turd, smells like dog turd, yep, must be dog turd. Why me lord, where is her mother at times like this? To say the sight left me speechless is an understatement. Voof! Where was Dr. Spock, the famous baby expert, when I most needed him with a bucket and rag? Coward! If I were he, I would hide with *her mother* from this mess, too! My disbelief vanished in the retching one feels with his breakfast for the last week hurling past tonsils clearing the way for what followed: a heaving adult cleaning the drooling mouth and face of a bawling child smeared with gooey dog-doo, belching turd breath while wordlessly gagging - 'get it off me this instant- gaaaag!!!' Briefly, we had a daddy-daughter bonding moment gagging in stereo. Thoughts of *stomach please do not abandon me* quieted those of *if I only get through this...* someday everyone will laugh about it - maybe. Einstein was right about time being relative: it really does slow to a crawl during moments like these. The opinion is still out as to what was more difficult in cleaning up that kid - keeping her mess off me or mine off her. That was how her childhood went; when she caught cooties from school, daycare or wherever did she give them to her mom? Nooooooooooooo, daughter shared them with me every time. What did I do to you in deserving your wrath, kid?! Then we spent a week in separate beds suffering cootie fever. Move over Covid you aint seen nothing compared to little kid's diseases! We survived that historic day named 'The Dog-Doo Affair,' which to think about still makes my stomach turn a back flip. Nevermore do I touch any turd-shaped-brown candy; come to think about it, now well into her adulthood, neither does she.